DC
The SAGA of The
SWAMP THING
30
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 30p
NOV. 84
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE NEW
DC
THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW.
SR BISSETTE & OTOLEBE

THE RETURNED MAN SMILES...

THE RETURNED MAN CHUCKLES...

...AND OUTSIDE THE LOUISIANA SKY SOARS FROM RIM TO RIM, CURDLING THE NOVEMBER CLOUDS.

...AND A SHOCKWAVE OF NIGHTMARE RIPPLES OUT ACROSS THE SLEEPING CONTINENT...

G-1477

... AND IN LAFAYETTE, JODY HERBERT COMES ACROSS THE WINO PASSED OUT IN AN ALLEYWAY AND JODY HAS A BOOK OF MATCHES IN HIS POCKET AND THERE'S NOBODY ELSE AROUND...

...AND IN ALEXANDRIA, TINA-LOUISE PIERCE SAYS "THE HELL WITH IT" AND LIFTS THE ANCIENT IRON FRYING PAN THAT HER HUSBAND IS TOO CHEAP TO REPLACE...

THE SAGA OF SWAMP THING 30 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., PO Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside USA $10.00. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in USA. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

...AND IN SHREVEPORT, JIM AND CAROLE PATTERSON'S PET CAT SPOCK DECIDES THAT THEIR SON RICKIE'S CRIB IS A WARM PLACE TO SIT...

...AND IN LAKE CHARLES A GUIDE DOG SUDDENLY GROWS IRRITATED WITH ITS MISTRESS...

...AND ON A FARM THREE MILES WEST OF CROWLEY SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS BORN THAT CRIES LIKE A WOMAN AND THEN DIES...

...AND IN HOUMA, ABIGAIL CABLE JUST CAN'T STOP SCREAMING...

...AND THE RETURNED MAN LOOKS UPON HIS WORKS...

...AND HE SEES THAT THEY ARE GOOD.

A HALO OF FLIES

AN ALAN MOORE WRITER

•

STEPHEN BISSETTE and ALFREDO ALCALA ARTISTS

•

KAREN BERGER EDITOR

•

TATJANA WOOD COLORIST

•

JOHN COSTANZA LETTERER

presentation

AHH, BUT YOU ARE PALE, MY DARLING, PALE...

...THOUGH NOT, I THINK, SO PALE AS WE.

BE STILL, MY CHARNEL-LILY. DO NOT TREMBLE.

YOUR UNCLE HAS A YARN TO TELL, A JOKE, A BEDTIME STORY...

A TALE OF HOW IT WAS WHEN I WAS DEAD.

"MY EYE IMPLODED AND PHOSPHOROUS SHRIEKED THROUGH MY ARTERIES. I HEARD A DEAFENING CHORD CRASHED OUT UPON A THOUSAND HARPS...

"THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO LOOSE ONE'S GRIP FROM OFF THE THROAT OF LIFE.

4

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

"IT WAS MY FAILURE THAT SHRIVELED ME. NEXT TO THIS, THE SCALDING EMBRACE OF THE LIGHTNING WAS AS NOTHING.

"WHILE REACHING FOR ANOTHER'S FLESH IN WHICH TO DRAPE MY INTELLECT, I HAD BEEN CHEATED!

"CHEATED BY A PRIMI, A CYPHER, A THING NO MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN THE MOST DESPISED OF BEETLES...

"THIS BUG, THIS WORTHLESS SPECK, HAD WITH HIS DEATH DISPLACED DEATHLESS ARCHAYE...

"CONDEMNING ME TO THE DUSK LATITUDES...

"...TO THE COBWEBBED LANDS...

5

"...TO THE DISTAL REGION OF THE BODILESS MEN.

"THERE WERE SO MANY OF THEM, CAUGHT THERE IN THE FOGS OF AFTERLIFE, THEIR SOULS TOO DENSE AND IRONBOUND TO CLIMB TOWARD THE LIGHT.

"POISONERS, TRAITORS, TYRANTS AND TORTURERS...

"THEIR EVIL WAS MASSIVE. IT HAD A GRAVITY, A COLD PSYCHIC UNDERTOW THAT DRAGGED AT MY AWARENESS...

"BUT I STRUGGLED FREE, FROM FINGERS WITHOUT BLOOD OR BONE OR SINEW...

"I STRUGGLED FREE FROM THAT MALIGN AND TREACLE-BLACK TWILIGHT...

"...MAKING MY WAY BACK TO THE BLEACHED HEMISPHERES BEYOND...

"...BACK TO MY DISCARDED CLAY AS A SERPENT WILL RETURN TO FRESH SLOUGHED SKIN.

"IT LAY THERE IN THE DIRT.

"SO SMALL...

"SO DIMINISHED...

"IT WAS A THING OF STARING, IDIOT SOCKETS AND SCORCHED METAL; OF MELTED WIRES THAT TRAILED LIKE GANGLIA FROM THE PERISHED FLESH.

"I COULD NOT WEAR THIS TRAVESTY.

"BUT I WAS IN THE WORLD ONCE MORE, THE WORLD THAT STRETCHED ABOUT ME LIKE A VAST WARDROBE, FILLED WITH HALF-AWAKE CORPSES.

"I WOULD CLOTHE MY SPIRIT ELSEWHERE..."

...IN WHATEVER RAGS WERE AVAILABLE.

YOU...

...TOOK MATT'S BODY... MADE HIM INTO A *MONSTER*...

OH GOD, MATT...

DEAREST ABIGAIL, YOUR GRASP OF THE INHUMAN IS SO *LIMITED* AND *SHALLOW*.

YOU *SPARE* YOURSELF THE *FULLEST* HORROR...

LONG BEFORE HE LOANED HIS FLESH TO *ME*, MATTHEW JOSEPH CABLE WAS NO *STRANGER* TO *MONSTROSITY*...

"WITH NIM, IT WAS A MONSTROSITY OF LUST, OF ABERRATIONS NURTURED AND WEAKNESSES INDULGED.

"A FLUKE OF THE BRAIN HAD GIVEN YOUR HUSBAND ABILITIES TO SHAKE WHAT GODS THERE BE, THE POWER TO BEND THE WORLD AND MAKE DREAMS TOUCHABLE.

"HE SQUANDERED IT ON TRIVIAL AND SQUALID DIORAMAS."

TROUTSKINNED WOMEN WITH THE LUSTER OF NEON...

...WOMEN OF SMOKE...

...MANIKINS TEXTURED LIKE APRICOTS...

NO!! I'M NOT LISTENING!! NO NO NO NO...

YESSSS!!

CERTAINLY, MY PROXIMITY DID NOT *HINDER* HIS DISINTEGRATION...

...BUT *MATTHEW CABLE* BEAT HIS *OWN* PATH TO HELL.

"I MERELY *WAITED*...

"...AND *WATCHED*...

"LENDING ANY INFLUENCE TO AN OCCASIONAL DIVERSION...

"... A MOMENTARY DISTRACTION...

"... A CHOREOGRAPHED DISASTER.

"THE FINAL BLOW, WHEN STRUCK, CAME AS A STROKE OF SWEETEST MERCY.

"HE SURRENDERED HIS FLESH WILLINGLY..."

... AND WITHOUT REMORSE.

THUS, YOUR HUSBAND'S SHELL IS MINE TO WEAR...

...YOUR HUSBAND'S TALENTS MINE TO EMPLOY.

I AM ARCANE!

I AM RETURNED FROM THE DEAD..

...AND THERE IS NOTHING THAT I CANNOT DO.

AND THE RETURNED MAN SMILES...

10

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING

...AND IN MONROE, HATTIE DUPLANTIS REMEMBERS HOW HER SISTER DOREEN (NOW SICK AND QUITE HELPLESS) USED TO TORMENT HER WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD...

...AND IN LITTLE ROCK, CHERYL AND LONI WILLIAMS WAIT UNTIL THEIR FATHER AND THEIR SLUTTY NEW STEPMOTHER ARE ASLEEP BEFORE PLAYING WITH THE KITTEN HE BOUGHT HER...

...AND IN BEAUMONT ALL THE TROPICAL FISH AT THE FIRST WATER PET SHOP BEGIN TO EAT, FIRST EACH OTHER, THEN THEMSELVES...

...AND IN SPRINGFIELD THERE IS A BRIEF AND SPECTACULAR PLAGUE OF LADYBUGS...

...AND BENEATH THE EARTH THERE ARE MUFFLED, BOOMING VOICES...

...AND BENEATH THE OCEAN THERE ARE TERRIBLE LIGHTS...

...AND ABOVE THE SKY A WATCHMAN WATCHES...

MONITOR...?

I THINK SOMETHING'S *HAPPENING* IN *LOUISIANA*...

I'M GETTING A WAVE-PORTRAIT AROUND THE EIGHT HUNDREDS...

THE EIGHT *HUNDREDS*? LET ME SEE...

HM. ABOVE *SIX* HUNDRED WE'RE DEALING WITH POWER-USERS IN THE *SUPERNATURAL* CATEGORY..

ABOVE *EIGHT* HUNDRED WE'RE DEALING WITH EITHER THE DEMON *JASON* OR THE *SPECTRE*.

BOTH OF THOSE ARE CURRENTLY BEYOND THIS CONTINUUM, SIR...

YES. I KNOW.

IT'S *SPREADING*, WHATEVER IT IS... COVERING THE SOUTH AND HEADING NORTH...

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

DO?

WE *WATCH*...

...AND THE RIPPLES WIDEN ACROSS AMERICA, SHIMMERING LIKE LIQUID CHROMIUM THROUGH THE VERY *DARKEST* MINDS... THE *DESPERATE*... THE *DEPRAVED*...

... THE DERANGED.

C'MON, WOODRUE, EASY, NOW...

...THE BAYOU...

...COMING OUT OF THE BAYOU...

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THEM ALL TONIGHT?

BEATS ME. WOODRUE JUST WENT BERSERK AND STARTED UP WHACKIN' HIS HEAD AGAINST THE CELL DOOR...

TROUBLE IS, ANATOMY LIKE THAT, WHO CAN SAY HOW BAD HE'S HURT HIMSELF?

HOW DO THEY EXPECT US TO COPE WITH FREAKS LIKE THESE?

I HAD TO HELP SEDATE TWO-FACE EARLIER. JEEZ, THAT GUY SCARES ME...

OH YEAH? YOU WANNA SEE SOMETHING REALLY SCARY?

...KHAM
...YLVM
...R THE
...SALLY
...ANE

THERE...

...THE JOKER'S STOPPED LAUGHING.

...AND THE WAVES ROLL OUT, SHELLING UPON A FEVER-TIDE, THEIR BLACKNESS UNRELIEVED BY FOAM...

13

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

...AND THE RETURNED MAN GESTURES WITH A STOLEN HAND...

...AND DISMISSES HIS SERVANTS...

...AND THEN GOES OUT...

...GOES OUT WALKING...

...SHIRTLESS IN THE FREEZING FOG.

AND AFTER A WHILE, IT BEGINS TO SNOW.

NG

SWAMP THING

CREATED BY LEN WEIN and BERNI WRIGHTSON

HOLLAND...

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

MATT...?

MATTHEW CABLE NO LONGER EXISTS.

GUESS AGAIN.

ARCANE.

ARCAAAANE!

I AM RETURNED..

...AND THE ENERGIES THAT CHURN WITHIN ME ARE AS LIMITLESS...

...AS MY VERY GREAT NEED FOR REVENGE.

THEN WHY... DOES ONE...SO REVENGEFUL... WASTE... SO MUCH TIME... WITH TALK?

BECAUSE YOUR EVENTUAL DESTRUCTION IS ALREADY A FACT, ACCOMPLISHED AND ABSOLUTE...

...AND BECAUSE I DESIRE TO SEE YOU DANCE ONE FINAL, CLUMSY, DESPERATE WALTZ.

HA HA HA

...AND IN HOUMA A YOUNG SAILOR ON SHORELEAVE ASKS SALLY PARKS TO EXCUSE HIM, IT'S JUST THAT HE KNOWS HER FACE FROM SOMEWHERE...

...AND OUTSIDE LAFAYETTE, JODY HERBERT SUDDENLY DECIDES TO TAKE A RIDE ON UP TO THE BAYOU...

LA 3.11

...AND GUS PRITCHETT GALES OUT OVER A SCHOOL-YARD ABANDONED TO SHADOW AND THINKS HOW SWELL IT IS TO BE BACK...

...AND IN MONROE, HATTIE DUPLANTIS SHUDDERS AND RESOLVES TO GO FOR A WALK RATHER THAN THINK ABOUT THE MESS IN THE BEDROOM...

HONK! ONK! ONK!

BIJOU

...AND MARK NEWELL HAS FOUND A CAR...

6MJ

PROUD TO BE COONASS

...AND EVERYTHING BAD WITHIN TWO HUNDRED MILES FINDS ITSELF HEADING FOR LOUISIANA WITHOUT KNOWING WHY...

...AND THE RETURNED MAN WALKS HOME, TO PREPARE FOR HIS MANY VISITORS.

CRAK

AUUEEEEUG

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

HOW...LONG...?

HA HA HA HA HA HA

HOW LONG HAS SHE BEEN DEAD??

HA HA

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

NEXT: THE BRIMSTONE BALLET

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
Dick Giordano, Vice Pres.-Executive Editor
Karen Berger, Editor
Tom Condon, Managing Editor
Pat Bastienne, Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Editorial Director
Paul Levitz, Vice Pres.-Operations
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer

To Messrs. all:

You've surprised me!

When I heard that the JLA would be the guest stars in SWAMP THING #24, I was quick to call this a stupid move, considering the constantly progressive realistic mood Moore, Bissette, Totleben, and Wein worked so hard to achieve. I perceived the presence of the JLA as a cheap, inconsiderate move to bolster ailing sales. Even when the book arrived on the shelves, I chastised it for weeks, until curiosity finally got the better of me! Besides, issue #23 sort of left me hanging!

So today I bought the book, read it, and quickly proceeded to hit myself on the head with my stack of Titan's books, which proved a billion times over that you can't pigeonhole the new DC!

What can I say about "Roots"? The book was flawless! I've never read a comic dripping with so much excellent characterization! DC better secure writer Alan Moore under lock and key! If this talented writer ever decides to spread his wings and try screenwriting ... Ooh, boy!

Keep up the all-around teamwork, fellas! Go ahead! Surprise me!

Sincerely,
Tyrone Anthony Biljan
39 Viking Drive
Grimsby, Ontario
Canada
L3M 3V2

OKAY!!

*****

Dear Swamp People:

I must commend Alan Moore, Stephen Bissette, John Totleben, and, of course, editor Len Wein for making the recent handful of issues of THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING a grand reading experience. This creative team's understanding of the Muck Monster far overshadows all of this strip's post-Wrightson contributors.

We have recently glimpsed into the mind of Swamp Thing, an area that has never really been explored before. I find it interesting that, in issue #24, Swamp Thing has finally accepted his cruel transformation, peacefully abandoning any hopes of once again being restored to his original form of Alec Holland. For twenty years now, the Hulk and the Thing have constantly bemoaned their plights, and that bores the longtime reader. Having a "monster" like Swamp Thing actually accept his fate will no doubt pave the way for a new direction for this series.

I no longer pity the Swamp Thing; in fact, I even envy him a bit. He isn't boggled with the multitudinous problems that we humans face daily in "civilization." He is one with nature, and he is complacent. How many people do you know that are truly satisfied with their lives? I can't name one. Yeah, maybe the Swamp Thing is pretty fortunate, after all.

The JLA was handled extremely well in SOTST #24. Surprisingly, we were treated to a sight that is seldom shown in the pages of their own magazine: from their satellite headquarters, the JLA'ers were observing their opponent (Woodrue) before taking action. Too often the League simply zips off into battle, without first studying their enemy. I think that an effective team would want to know what they are up against before a confrontation, and apparently Alan Moore agrees.

The Bissette/Totleben art is perfect for this strip (and they also can draw a mean Hawkman). The only thing I didn't like about their effort this issue was the close-up of Firestorm's face on page nine ... he looked like Jean Stapleton!! I almost expected Superman to tell the spunky Nuclear Man to "stifle himself."

By comparison, Jason Woodrue makes the Joker appear completely sane. I was moved by the compassion that Superman and Green Lantern expressed towards this sick, pitiable creature during his capture. Another nice touch was GL calling Superman by his christened name, Kal. Most writers tend to neglect his Kryptonian appellation. Even though this was merely a guest shot, the Justice League has not been handled this well in ages. Maybe you've found a future JLA scripter in Alan Moore. He's also the perfect choice for the proposed Superman/Swamp Thing pairing in the upcoming DC COMICS PRESENTS.

SOTST transcends the boundaries that the classification "mystery comic" ensues. And if it's not a mystery comic, or a super-hero comic, or a science-fiction comic, or a funny animal comic, or a sword and sorcery comic, then what is it? *Entertaining*, that's what!!

Despite the aforementioned "Dingbat" Firestorm, I'd have to say SOTST #24 was *flawless*! I've been reading comics for close to twenty years and writing to them for half as long, and I've never found a single issue of a comic I enjoyed as much as this one. Kudos to all! THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING is one comic I will definitely recommend to others.

Sorry for the length of this letter, but I had to express my enthusiasm for your superb efforts. In closing, a request: now that this series has surpassed the numbering of its predecessor, can you *please* drop "The Saga of the" and simply call it SWAMP THING?

Peace,
Michael Eury
98 Lawndale Avenue
Concord, NC 28025

Edith Bunker, huh? Personally, I don't see the resemblance, but everyone's entitled to their own opinion, and in this case, perception. No two artists interpret a character the same way; if they did, life would be boring. As for THE SAGA OF, we feel it fits the mood and milieu of the book, especially since the words connote the directions in which Alan is headed.

*****

Dear Len and friends,

Of course I'm impressed by the current run in SWAMP THING. What really amazed me was issue 24. You actually pulled it off.

I was sure that the sad, shaggy Swamp Thing of recent months and the delightfully swishy Woodrue would be able to coexist with the Justice League of America. Surely Woodrue would become just another crazy super-villain and Holland-never-was would be back where he was ten years ago (note: ten years ago Swamp Thing was doing a guest shot in Conway's CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN).

I shouldn't have forgotten where I'd first heard the name Alan Moore. The man who made a forgotten British imitation of Captain Marvel into a being who actually seemed more than human, wasn't going to give us the *Super-Friends*.

Alan Moore feels about super-heroes the way I do, I think. They are myth-figures for our culture, embodiments of what we desire and fear. It is appropriate that they should evoke awe in those who watch them at play. Of course, they're sometimes grotesque and absurd. People are absurd, so why should their gods be otherwise?

I want to see more of Alan Moore's super-heroes. He's very good with

them. He knows what they are and how they should be treated. The Swamp Thing is of the same kind. Not a super-hero, certainly, but he *is* a myth-figure, a being who stands for more than himself (or is it that we are never able to stand completely for ourselves?).

Hopefully,
John M. Burt
517 NM 16th St.
Corvallis, OR 97330

On the other hand ...

*****

Dear Sirs:

Were it not for the sake of preserving the continuity of my SOTST collection, issue #24 would find itself on the bottom of some obscure compost heap.

What vicissitudes have occurred? SOTST was once such an extraordinary comic.

My foremost grievance is the story-line. Swampy's meeting something "similiar" to Jason Woodrue would be great. Unfortunately, he had to meet *the* Jason Woodrue, insuring the presence of the JLA. Here is where the moss in my hemoglobin boils. The JLA does not belong in Swampy's mag. They are as out of place there as the LSH would be in WARLORD. The art wasn't even JLA style. Oh, the panels were good, but they're just not what we've become accustomed to. The characters other than the JLA looked terrific. Swampy would be improved if you'd get the little flowers off of him and make him appear as he did when Yeates did the art. But please, never let other super-heroes appear in this mag, and end my worries about the contingency of Plastic Man appearing in SOTST.

To paraphrase a certain American patriot: "I know not how others may feel about Swampy's returning to his pristine state of glorious prominence, but as for me, give me the original Swampy, or give me Spider-Man!"

Chagrinfully,
The Sesquipedalian
No address given

*****

Dear Sirs:

The all-around excellent quality of issue #24 has prompted me to write this letter and at the same time subscribe to your wonderful novel. (I call it a novel, to separate it from things such as GI JOE or THE NEW MUTANTS, which are called comics, but aren't in the same league as SWAMP THING.) Now, with my subscription, I don't have to camp out at the door of the local comic store.

Issue #24 was a very good wrap-up of the Floronic Man saga. A villain defeated in a nonviolent manner, something pretty rare in comic books. I'm kind of glad also, because the Floronic Man did have a point in his argument, even though he went about achieving his goals in the wrong manner. Man must find a way of living peacefully with nature; if we cut down a forest it must be replanted; if the world needs more energy we must find methods (such as solar energy) that don't pollute and thus destroy nature. I think Swampy said it best himself when he said, "Yes. I wonder, will *your* people do as much?" after Abby had said that the plants had backed down. Speaking of Swampy, with this issue he seems at peace, and he seems to possess an inner wisdom that was lacking before.

In all the letters I have written to this mag I have not said one critical remark, and the reason for that is...you guys have been perfect and left me with nothing to criticize. Maybe there's one thing: why aren't there any Puerto Ricans in this book??? Oh, yeah, how 'bout giving an issue just to focus on Abby, my favorite other person in this mag. One final thing, the last page in issue #24 was truly beautiful.

Sincerely,
Jose Martinez
12 Tudor Lane
Bel Air, MD 21014

P.S. The super-hero team-up did not go as badly as I thought. Still, keep other super-heroes from this book.

We try to portray society as it is, Jose, with a broad range of ethnic characters. So far in SOTST there hasn't been a storyline involving the Puerto Rican nationality. That's not to say that there won't be at some future date.

*****

Dear Editor,

Having just come to the end of one of the greatest ever "runs" in the history of comics, let alone the history of the SWAMP THING, I am compelled to write to you for the first time. I am of course referring to SOTST #24, in which the "Saga" has finally emerged from the shadow of the Wein/Wrightson classics. But no sooner have I finished reading "Roots" than I start to worry—is this not the logical end to the SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING, the way he can be written into comic book limbo? After all, we have now reached that dreaded stage when the original title was cancelled: the 24th issue, and despite a tantalizing preview of next month's cover, there is a lack of letters. I know from past experience that this can often mean very bad news.

Nevertheless, Alan Moore has opened up a whole can of worms, and could take Swampy anywhere—he's already given him a new origin and has taken the magazine to heights I never thought it was likely to achieve. Mr. Moore is such a versatile writer that he can even introduce the JLA without allowing them to intrude too much. He is also clearly adept at allowing the artists as much room as possible: the artwork of Stephen Bissette and John Totleben has gotten better and better. To call it breathtaking would not be an exaggeration—nor I think would it be an overstatement to say that this is the best art, and the best comic, currently on sale.

Yours faithfully,
Simon Bullivent
8 Guilford Place
London

The reason there was no letter column in issue #24 was not due to a lack of mail, Simon. Fan response has been tremendous and keeps on getting better each month. Unfortunately, that month, there was a problem with the typesetting, and we're sure it won't happen again. As for the "dreaded stage"—we're way passed issue #24, and happy to say, doing just swell, thank you.

*****

Dear Alan, Stephen, and John:

I've been with SOTST since issue #1, mostly because I wanted a break from super-types running around in skin-tight Danskins. I haven't been sorry I did since. There's a quality about SWAMP THING that simply can't be described. The art has a brooding and melancholy flavor that reinforces the stories rather than distracting from it. Few comics today rarely possess such a mind-stabbing impact. Namely, the ability to have a "message" and get it across in such a style to leave the reader rehashing it after the book is laid aside. The chemistry between writer and artist is on a level that should inspire envy in every creative team out there. Issue #24 confirmed this in a positive and moving way.

At first I wasn't thrilled about the JLA's presence, but instead of bailing Swampy out and giving him the usual uplifting, spiritual advice I expected, their conversation aboard the satellite gave the story just the right edge. In every way #24 is a masterpiece. From the beautifully executed JLA satellite above the earth where the "over-people" sit like some kind of helpless demigods to the shock of Evangeline's intro on page 10 (an unforgettable portrayal of technology's helplessness in resolving some issues) to the fantastic rendition of Swampy rising alone above a gloomy swamp in the red light of dawn. That scene alone possessed all the triumph and tragedy contained in the SWAMP THING! I'm hooked, guys! Whatever you do with Swampy in the future, don't let him sink in the mediocre mire of a lot of books on the racks now. There's so much potential I don't think you've even begun to tap.

Richard Youghn
3734 Jeffersonville Rd.
Macon, GA 31201

*****

In closing, I'd like to thank Alfredo Alcala for pitching in with his fine inking this issue. Next month—Swamp Thing avenges Abby's death in the ultimate battle against Arcane and the fate of Abby and Matt is revealed! You won't want to miss "The Brimstone Ballet"! And on an entirely different note... Barring the unforeseen, Alan, Steve, and John are all planning to be at the Creation Convention in New York City at the end of August. So, for all of you lucky people who live in and around the New York area, check your favorite fan magazine for announcements.

Thanks for reading, everyone, and we'll see you next month—Karen